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ABSTRACT

Recommendations presented to the Southern Regional Education Board by its Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools, as a comprehensive program to improve the quality of teaching and learning at all education levels, are reviewed. Priorities fall into three major areas: improving the quality of teachers and other school personnel, improving the curriculum at the secondary and postsecondary levels, and coordination between the sectors of education. Recommendations about teachers and other school personnel deal with their selection, certification, preparation, and continuing education. Recommendations regarding curriculum call for higher academic standards in high schools and colleges, as well as improving the preparation of youth for work. Recommendations for joint action by the agencies and institutions that govern and deliver education in the region are made, since their cooperation is essential if the recommendations are to be implemented. Financial implications of the recommendations are also considered. Among the specific recommendations are the following: states should apply selection procedures throughout the entire process of preparing teachers (rather than at the end point only), starting with tighter admission standards and ending with performance evaluation of all beginning teachers; in each state, the ongoing evaluation of teacher education programs should be a joint activity of the state higher education board and of the state board of education; and the states should modify their certification regulations and remove rigid and unnecessary requirements. (SW)

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The need for quality

A Report to the Southern Regional Education Board by its Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools June, 1981

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Foreword

Upon action of the Executive Committee of the Southern Regional Education Board, Governor Bob Graham of Florida, Chairman of the Board, appointed a 17-member Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools in January 1981. The charge to the Task Force was to consider the linkage between our schools and colleges and in particular to select those priority issues and problems on which states, schools, and colleges must act jointly in order to strengthen education at all levels.

In our deliberations during the winter and spring of 1981, the Task Force was mindful that over the last generation the South has made tremendous strides toward the improvement of education. It is no small accomplishment, for example, that within the past 30 years the region has moved from having less than half of its young people graduate from high school to today's rate of nearly 75 percent. The expansion of higher education has been equally astounding, with enrollments in public institutions alone now 10 times as high as 30 years ago.

But these accomplishments should not mask the serious questions about quality that confront us today. We reject the notion that the myriad ills of society—such as changes in family life and the distracting effects of television—make it impossible to put education's house in order. Difficult and elusive questions of educational quality can and must be addressed in earnest by a stronger partnership of higher education and the schools.

What follows is our report to the Southern Regional Education Board, including recommendations for action that can be taken now to achieve improvements and for matters that require further study. In our work, we constantly reminded ourselves that we could not consider all of education's problems and that our particular charge was to focus on the interdependence of the levels of education. We realized that we necessarily would have to be selective. Thus, the priorities and recommendations discussed herein are, in our judgment, those school-college matters most worthy of attention by both political and

educational leaders at this time. Their implementation, of course, will depend in large measure on continuing and expanding cooperation among all sectors of education.

We acknowledge and express appreciation for the contributions of several consultants and SREB staff who assisted the Task Force.

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Introduction: The Quality Crisis in Education

An imperative need confronts the schools and higher education to work together to improve the quality of education at all levels. Current movements to test pupils in various grades, to test prospective teachers, and to require exit examinations as a condition for college graduation reflect a growing public belief that educational quality is unacceptably low. But all these steps represent only a quest for minimal competencies—a far cry from the quality desired by many parents and educators.

Over the past generation the Southern states have made giant strides in expanding educational facilities and offerings, and in extending opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education. Now, as the region aspires to a leading economic role in the nation, there is unprecedented need and opportunity to improve the quality of education, provided public support is marshalled to that end.

Deterrents to quality include teacher shortages, declining college enrollments, fiscal constraint

With rising elementary school enrollments and declining interest by college students in majoring in teacher education, there will be a general shortage of teachers by the mid-Eighties. Some school systems already report critical teacher shortages in several fields. These conditions will make it increasingly difficult to stress quality and tighten selection of beginning teachers when the push is on once again for mere bodies to staff classrooms. Meanwhile, with enrollment declines on the horizon, colleges may be tempted to abandon or reject higher standards for admission and retention of students. How much attention may colleges be expected to pay to excellence when they are fighting for survival with budgets based on student counts?

In the Sunbelt as elsewhere, sharply increased competition between various public services for available tax revenues means that education will operate in a general climate of fiscal constraint. The financial pressure on public schools is compounded by a growing disillusionment with public elementary and secondary education by families of all income levels, races, and geographic locations.

These factors underscore the urgency to make educational improvements, which are unlikely to take place without wide scale cooperation among all levels of education. Continued duplication of efforts, ineffective programs that do not meet their objectives, rigid institutional arrangements that do not fit today's reality, in short, the luxury of "business-as-usual," cannot continue to prevail.

The goal for the 80s: Surpass minimum competencies

The region's immediate challenge is to implement minimum standards across the board, in each state, be it for high school graduation or for employment of teachers. More important, the region should seek to achieve during the Eighties substantial improvement of academic standards above these minimum expectations.

The priorities for joint consideration and action by higher education and the schools which follow are based on these assumptions.

Improvements in the teaching profession depend not only on tighter selection and better preparation of teachers, but also on public respect and financial rewards for teachers. Success in attracting and retaining quality teachers hinges on no single factor. Higher standards for teacher education programs, tighter certification requirements, teaching internships, on-the-job assessments, and better management—all are among the proposals being advanced as parts of overall plans. Many claim that significantly increased salaries are an important part of the solution, perhaps the most important. But there is little indication that the public will provide significantly more support in the face of declining quality. Thus, while salaries are part of the solution, substantially higher pay will have to be linked to a number of quality improvement efforts before the public responds favorably.

Better rewards for teachers

Average teacher salaries for 13 of the SREB states rank below the national average. Recognizing this, some states are setting salary goals for their teachers as part of their overall improvement plans. A commitment to higher teacher salaries sends an encouraging signal to those teachers already employed and to those college students considering a teaching career. Salary goals are being measured against different benchmarks: one state has set the national average as the target; another, the average for teachers in adjacent states; and another, the top quarter of national teacher salaries.

Therefore, in addition to the specific recommendations which follow, it is clear that improved teacher salaries should be a major part of comprehensive efforts to improve quality, and states should attempt to set short and intermediate range salary goals to signal their commitment to present and future teachers.

Opportunity, quality, and diversity not incompatible

Opportunity, quality, and diversity are not contradictory goals. Our commitment to maintain and extend educational opportunity must reject acceptance of mediocrity, and strongly support additional resources to insure that educational opportunity becomes synonymous with achievement. Our schools and postsecondary institutions serve a student population with a wide span of abilities and needs that require programs with varying objectives. Yet each set of needs—whether for basic literacy, for vocational education, or for college preparation—demands focused and unwavering attention to quality. Diversity should not be used as an alibi for failure to challenge the highest potential in each student.

Special needs of black students

The commitment to quality for the 1980s must address the special needs of black students, many of whom have major deficiencies in academic skills. For example, at the college level, a response does not lie simply in denying admission to underprepared blacks, although higher admission standards may be in order over the long term. A permanent solution must involve curriculum reform at the secondary and college levels, with mandatory intensification of communication and quantitative coursework. To a considerable degree, the success of such reform depends on an adequate supply of highly qualified black teachers. Incentives are needed to attract high achievers among the black college students into teacher education programs.

Remove superfluous tasks assigned to schools

The primary objective of the schools is to educate our youth, and to the extent that society continues to assign superfluous tasks to the schools, the central objectives of education will suffer. Attempts by special interests to dump additional functions upon the schools should be resisted, and encouragement should be given to efforts, such as those in Texas, to reduce existing tangential objectives that have been imposed on the schools, legislatively or otherwise.

The priorities discussed in the following pages fall into three major areas: improving the quality of teachers and other

school personnel, improving the curriculum at the secondary and postsecondary levels, and coordination between the sectors of education. Recommendations about teachers and other school personnel deal with their selection, certification, preparation, and continuing education. Recommendations regarding curriculum call for higher academic standards in high schools and colleges, as well as improving the preparation of youth for work. Recommendations for joint action by the agencies and institutions that govern and deliver education in the region are made, since their cooperation is essential if the preceding recommendations are to be implemented.

On the assumption that suggested improvements will have to be financed largely through savings generated by greater cooperation and productivity in the educational establishment, a concluding section discusses financial implications of the recommendations.

Selecting Future Teachers

Southern states have been innovative in improving the methods for selecting teachers. Some states are now requiring higher admission standards for students who wish to enter teacher education programs. This follows the finding that on many campuses students majoring in education have lower Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores than other majors on their campus. These steps have taken three forms. Some states test for basic skills in literacy and computation, while others test the general education background that covers the liberal arts program of the first two years of college. Another approach has been to raise the grade point average required for admission into colleges of education.

Testing for admission into teacher education programs

Some states are now testing applicants for the teaching profession after their graduation from college. Before being granted a certificate to teach, candidates must attain a minimum score on a standard test. Unless those required scores are sufficiently high, of course, the tests will contribute little or nothing to the upgrading of teaching. Some states are now using the National Teacher Examinations, for which they set their own cut-off scores. A few states have developed their own tests, either of minimum basic skills or of specific competencies that teachers are expected to master to be able to teach students in various specialties. And, other states are adding detailed assessments of beginning performance in the classroom and an intern period before teachers are eligible for renewable or "tenured" certificates.

Exit exams and performance evaluations

There is criticism that tests measure only content and not the ability of the teacher to transmit that content to students. However, teachers cannot teach what they do not know. If tests can be devised to measure the ability to teach as well, these too would be useful. In the meantime, it is important to determine the extent of mastery a prospective teacher has of a subject area.

Some states are exercising tighter selection at various points in the process of developing a teacher. It would seem more fair to aspiring teachers to discover early in their training whether they need remedial work or if they are not suited to the profession than to eliminate them after an investment of four years.

Regional evaluation of teacher selection

It will be extremely important to evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches to improved selection as soon as sufficient evidence has been amassed, in part because of the cost involved. In Georgia, $2 million has been spent to develop a performance evaluation system for beginning teachers, and that figure does not include the continuing costs of training evaluators and assessing each teacher over a three-year period. The independent construction of new tests for teacher applicants in a number of states is a costly activity. More important than the costs involved, the parallel development and use of different tests by several states and the use of the National Teacher Examinations by others, with different cut-off points, raise two important questions. Are there really differences in what is expected of teachers in the various states? Will the use of a number of unrelated tests make it unnecessarily difficult to assess relative progress against commonly accepted standards for teacher performance?

The full value of teacher competency tests is wasted if the results are not used to identify and remedy the educational weaknesses of applicants and of the programs which produce large numbers of failures.

The following recommendations are addressed to improved teacher selection:

1 States should apply selection procedures throughout the entire process of preparing teachers (rather than at the end point only), starting with tighter admission standards and ending with performance evaluation of all beginning teachers. Testing is a crucial element in such a comprehensive statewide commitment to insure teacher quality. Passing scores on tests should be set and maintained at sufficiently high levels, and carefully monitored, not only to screen out the unqualified, but to help attract additional gifted students to the profession.

2 SREB should convene representatives of state departments of education and higher education agencies to consider the feasibility of developing a regional assessment of teacher selection techniques. A critique of teacher selection tests and other evaluation processes used or planned by the states should be a central part of this regional evaluation.

3 States should accommodate the interstate migration of well-qualified teachers by accepting a common test to avoid the necessity of retesting such individuals in various states.

Strengthening Teacher Education

There is no single issue on which greater coordination between the schools and universities is needed than on how to strengthen teacher education programs.

Proliferation of teacher programs

Approximately 350 colleges in the region are engaged in preparing beginning teachers. Yet, during recent years, the number of undergraduate teacher education students has diminished sharply. The general decline of enrollments, continued student interest in shifting preferences to other majors, and the possibility of tighter admission standards may further reduce undergraduate enrollments in colleges and departments of education.

With the decline in undergraduate enrollments, it is doubtful that there will be enough students to permit the maintenance of all the colleges or departments of education, to say nothing about improving their quality.

The situation is especially disturbing in view of the expectation of a general shortage of teachers in the region. In some states this shortage is already a real problem. To the extent that widely dispersed availability of teacher education programs may contribute to a larger supply of teachers, careful review of program need in relation to teacher supply and demand is indicated. On the other hand, it is quite clear that we do not need a complete array of specialties offered in each college of education. The unnecessary proliferation of specialty offerings is a particularly costly burden for institutions with marginal resources.

North Carolina, in an effort to improve the general quality of teacher education, evaluated the quality and productivity of all programs within each college or department of education, along with the state's needs for graduates of the programs. The review resulted in the discontinuation of 76 programs without sacrificing the availability of some type of teacher education in each of the 15 colleges that had programs.

The most important element of teacher education courses is the student teaching experience. Yet too often "student

Need for improved "student teaching" experience

teaching" is perfunctory. Master teachers are not compensated for their efforts, there is inadequate feedback to the student teachers, and education college faculty do not have sufficient contact with the schools. Also, exposure to the classroom typically occurs at the end of the baccalaureate program, when it may be too late for the student to learn if he or she is suited to perform well in the classroom.

Stronger ties between faculties of arts and science and of education

Efforts to improve teacher preparation must include active participation of the arts and science departments which have the responsibility for general education of teachers during their first two years of college. The prevalent lack of communication in most institutions between the arts and science faculty and the teacher education faculty is deplorable, especially since it is weakness in the general education of content component of a teacher's preparation that causes most failures on teacher certification tests. Subject matter courses need strengthening qualitatively and perhaps quantitatively. This may entail re-assignment of strong faculty to teach freshman and sophomore classes, regardless of faculty desires to teach advanced courses or engage in research. Such an effort may also entail joint appointments of faculty to arts and science and education departments to strengthen allegiance to each others' mission.

The following recommendations are presented to strengthen teacher education:

4 In each state, the ongoing evaluation of teacher education programs should be a joint activity of the state higher education board and of the state board of education, thus precluding separate evaluations by both agencies. Each state should assess the need for and the quality and productivity of all teacher education programs (and specialties). A top priority should be to eliminate unnecessary duplication and to consolidate programs. The private colleges should be encouraged to participate in such evaluation.

5 States should require actual coordination rather than lip service between schools and teacher education programs to provide quality student teaching assignments, with improved monitoring by both sectors, of each student teacher's performance. Early and sustained exposure to the classroom should be required for prospective teachers, beginning with the junior year, so that persons unsuited to the profession will have advance warning.

Certification of Teachers

Certification too complex and rigid

The cumbersome process of certifying teachers is being challenged as states address the problems of the public school system. The original purpose of certification of teachers was to protect children from incompetent teachers. This concept implies that certification puts a bottom, a general floor, on minimum qualifications, such as a baccalaureate degree or ability to pass a basic test. This concept differs greatly from the maze of intricate, rigid rules that now specify courses teachers must take for a multitude of specialties.

Some of the complexity of certification results from state legislation or federal mandates for programs, or from vested interest groups. The fragmentation and proliferation of innumerable types of certificates mirror the confusion about what the core curriculum should be in the schools. Teachers, the public, and their elected officials are now insisting on reform of the artificiality that has gradually burdened the certification system.

Content and methods in teacher preparation

The current concern about the quality of teachers has refocused attention on the ongoing debate about whether or not to certify arts and science graduates who lack required education courses. Those who favor opening the system point to failures by graduates of teacher education programs on content areas of teacher selection tests. They question the value of required professional education courses and point to the low levels of academic achievement in the schools (staffed largely with graduates of teacher education programs) as a basis for their doubts about this preparation.

Those who favor requiring that a prescribed minimum "professional education" core be taken by arts and science graduates, before final certification, claim that the education profession does have a body of knowledge about how to teach, and that the average prospective teacher could be greatly helped by exposure to this knowledge. They challenge whether a person without this training would be as able to cope with a room full of rowdy students, or with the diverse developmental patterns of first graders, as one who has had the training.

Lengthened preparation of teachers?

Some faculty in colleges of education are now proposing that the professional education courses would be of the greatest benefit after an individual completes a baccalaureate degree that centers on content. This would put the education courses in a graduate program. A variation of this approach is to treat the first year of teaching as an internship when the techniques of teaching would be taught on the job. It is evident that either suggestion, by lengthening the required preparation of all new teachers, would be an extremely costly step.

Provisional certification with performance evaluation

An approach that recognizes each set of advocates is to accept arts and science graduates to teach in their major field at the secondary level, and then to monitor and address weaknesses such individuals may have. Some states now employ arts and science majors provisionally and then require that they complete the professional education courses. A further accommodation to attract qualified and interested arts and science graduates into teaching would be to permit substitution of staff development activity for these education courses, or even to certify individuals who demonstrate the ability to teach without the necessity for further training. Such a system would depend, of course, on sound performance evaluation.

A corollary to reform of certification of beginning teachers applies to the upgrading of veteran teachers, as has been instituted in Alabama. There, teachers may now take content programs in the field taught instead of approved education programs in order to obtain advanced certification.

The following recommendation is made to improve the certification process:*

The states should modify their certification regulations and remove rigid and unnecessary requirements. Revision should identify and assign specific responsibilities for certification by both the state and the educational institution. Revision should also include provisional certification for all beginning teachers, including arts and science graduates for secondary school positions, until the performance of all beginning teachers has been evaluated.

Performance weaknesses in content or in "methods" areas, identified during provisional certification, should be addressed before regular certification is granted. Such remediation, if needed, should include relevant additional courses or staff development activity. The effects of the revised certification process should be evaluated on a regional basis.

*A minority statement submitted by William H. Drummond is on page 28.

Special School Personnel Needs

Several areas of public school programs deserve special attention by higher education and the schools: (1) the teaching of mathematics and science, (2) the vocational guidance of high school students, (3) the preparation of vocational education teachers for specialized industrial occupations, and (4) the leadership of the local schools.

Mathematics and Science

Critical shortage of math and science teachers

The scarcity of mathematics and science teachers in high schools is becoming critical. The lack of numerative ability demonstrated by student test results clearly attests to the need for greater attention to teaching mathematics. In general, all citizens will need increased scientific and mathematical literacy as a result of technological change. In addition, efforts by states to attract high technology industry are more likely to succeed if educational institutions prepare a sufficient supply of workers with solid backgrounds in basic science and mathematics.

Yet, the number of college graduates prepared to teach mathematics is declining nationally and regionally, and many who are so prepared, as well as prospective science teachers, are lured to industry where they command considerably higher salaries. Thus, current practices to attract and certify science and math teachers will not solve this growing problem.

Steps to relieve shortage

Although business pays sharply differentiated salaries to graduates of various disciplines to compete in scarce fields, a policy of pay supplements for mathematics and science teachers does not appear to be acceptable to teacher associations and school boards at this time. Therefore, other solutions must be pursued. Rigid adherence to certification requirements prevents the movement into teaching positions of needed science and mathematics majors who lack professional education courses, and of surplus teachers in related fields who might be "recycled." Science and mathematics in the introductory or middle grade courses may not have to be staffed by teachers with the same depth of preparation as needed in more advanced high school courses. Industry and business throughout the

region can be encouraged to share technical personnel to enrich the science and mathematics curriculum in the high schools.

Vocational Guidance

Another special need is for vocational guidance in the high schools. While counselors are generally well-equipped for their roles in advising college-bound students, all too frequently they are not prepared to serve the large proportion of students who enter the job market upon graduation or who are uncertain about their plans.

Vocational guidance for high school students is inadequate

The transition of youth from school to work is vital, but has generally been neglected by the schools. Part-time jobs are important to many students, regardless of whether they are part and parcel of a vocational program in the high school. They provide an exposure to work that is vital to the move from high school to employment. Yet, disadvantaged youth have great difficulty in finding jobs and need assistance from trained high school personnel.

Effective vocational guidance depends on personnel who know labor market trends, occupations, and job placement possibilities. It is important to determine who in the schools should perform this role—vocational teachers, school counselors in general, or special vocational guidance personnel. Once this decision is made, schools and colleges must develop programs and appropriate staff development activity to insure that high quality vocational guidance is generally provided to the students.

School Leadership

Generally speaking, the success or failure of a public school depends more on the principal than any other single person. Despite this, the role of the principal is not clearly defined, and all too often the collegiate preparation for principals does not offer a strong management program.

School leadership—the all-important difference

Current research indicates that progress toward a stronger school program is more likely to result from determined joint action by the principal and teachers of a school, its students, its parents, and its community patrons than from regulations and directives by state and federal authorities. Reports about schools where discouragement, discipline problems, and low achievement scores have been converted to new levels of motivation and

higher achievement consistently cite leadership within a school, coupled with strong involvement of parents and the immediate community, as a key ingredient of these success stories.

Calling on total management expertise

Exposure to a fuller array of programs in our universities can provide administrators with the tools for effective leadership and management in our schools. The expertise of the schools of business administration, and of business leaders in the region, could be mobilized to strengthen the school administration curriculum, which is now heavily centered in the colleges of education.

Several recommendations are offered concerning special personnel needs:

7 States should develop an array of incentives to attract science and math teachers, including scholarships or loan programs for prospective teachers tied to the teaching of these subjects within the state, following the established pattern of state subsidies to train medical personnel in short supply.

8 States should modify certification requirements to permit graduates in mathematics and science who lack professional education preparation to teach at the secondary levels, with safeguards to insure the quality of instruction. Certification should also accommodate teachers in related surplus fields to teach mathematics and science, with refresher courses as needed.

9 SREB should convene school officials, representatives from vocational education and counseling groups, practicing labor market specialists, and appropriate college faculties to develop a model for the effective delivery of vocational guidance in the region's high schools. Preparation programs and staff development activities should then be designed to correspond to the delivery model identified by this group.

10 SREB should convene a panel with regional representation of school principals and superintendents, the colleges of business administration and teacher education, and leaders of business and industry to consider improvements in the development of effective school leaders.

11 A regional analysis should be conducted of certification rules for skilled personnel to staff occupational programs in high demand. The relevancy of professional education courses and formal degrees for such personnel needs to be evaluated, especially in areas of shortages where industry offers higher salaries than the schools.

Continuing Education for Teachers

The improvement of today's classroom teaching depends more on assisting currently employed teachers than on tighter selection of new teachers. At current turnover rates, the recruitment of new teachers will not materially affect the overall composition of the teacher corps for some years. Thus, it is essential to focus on continuing education of the teachers now employed.

Urgent need for more effective continuing education

Continuing education of teachers (frequently referred to as in-service education) takes two major forms: (1) professional graduate studies pursued by teachers individually to upgrade their degrees or for recertification, and (2) school- or school district-initiated staff development.

States, local governments, and teachers are investing substantial time and money annually in continuing education. Public funds are allocated in various ways and may involve financing collegiate graduate teacher education programs; defraying teachers' tuition and fees for graduate courses; and supporting local school district staff development activities, including the indirect costs of teachers' salaries for days spent in staff development. When these and other costs of continuing education are calculated, the investment is considerable. Yet there is evidence that the effectiveness of these efforts could be greatly improved.

The graduate education that teachers pursue individually is not always relevant to improving their performance in the assignments they hold, while teachers sometimes view mandated staff development activities as questionable exercises to be endured.

Reward meaningful staff development as well as graduate education

Present reward systems for the continuing education of teachers encourage enrollment in graduate courses offered on or off campus. Under most current arrangements, the teacher who obtains 30 semester hours of graduate credits is much more likely to obtain a salary increase than the one who is heavily engaged in staff development activity. Yet, little is known about the relative effectiveness of the two options in improving the

teacher's performance in the classroom. The present reward system from the colleges' standpoint is also heavily weighted toward producing graduate degree credits, since they produce institutional income, unlike the service faculty render to schools or to staff development programs.

Sound staff development requires teacher participation and defined school objectives

This is not a general indictment of the present system, but it is a call for more formal recognition of planned staff development in meeting recertification requirements. There can be a danger of perfunctory staff development activity if it is not geared toward meeting planned objectives for improving the program of the school or school district, and if the individual teachers' weaknesses relative to such objectives are not addressed by such staff development programs.

Effective continuing education for teachers is characterized by (a) real participation of teachers in its planning; (b) objectives and plans agreed to at the school or district level to address the education program priorities of that school or school system; and (c) activities that address needs of both individual teachers, as assessed by evaluation of their performance, and the objectives of the school.

New incentives needed

Needed changes in the incentives for teachers and college faculty to promote meaningful continuing education include (a) rewards for teachers (salary increments and recertification) that recognize planned staff development activities on a par with graduate college credits; (b) funding directly to local school districts to put them in the buyer's seat to choose those faculty or college services that best suit their local staff development plans; and (c) faculty compensation that recognizes their service in response to local school district requests on a par with teaching for formal credits or with scholarly research.

Teacher centers, as a part of these overall efforts, need not necessarily be separate physical sites, nor "union" halls, but can highlight the role of teachers as partners in defining continuing education. If teacher centers are established, they must be integrated into the staff development objectives of the school and/or school district.

All of the above suggests that improvements in continuing education will not result from a piecemeal approach. Successful modifications of present continuing education programs in

states will address simultaneously all phases of the problem (teacher participation, local school system input, and the reward systems for teachers and college faculty).

The following recommendations are offered to help achieve comprehensive continuing education plans:

12 State laws and regulations should be revised to tie teacher pay increments and recertification to completion of meaningful graduate education or staff development activity. The graduate education should be relevant to the teacher's current assignment, and the staff development activity should represent a locally derived and state-approved plan. Such plans should address the educational needs of the individual teacher as identified by performance evaluation, as well as the objectives and problems of individual schools.

13 The states should increase staff development funding for local schools, contingent on strong joint efforts by school administrators and teachers at the local level in the design of staff development plans. Local school districts should be able to use these funds to purchase those college and/or faculty services that best meet their staff development needs.

14 Colleges and universities should be encouraged to utilize salary and promotion procedures that explicitly recognize faculty service to schools and school districts, especially where such service comes in answer to a school district request for staff development assistance.

Quality and the Curriculum

Duplication of curriculum

One of the major issues requiring coordinated action is the composition of the curriculum at both the high school and lower division college levels. On one hand, many complain that the twelfth grade in high school offers no challenge. On the other, colleges are faced with the problem of having to educate freshmen who lack basic communication and quantitative skills. This often results in a college curriculum that includes content which duplicates what was traditionally the responsibility of the high schools.

The high school curriculum and student diversity

The universal responsibility of the secondary schools to a student population with a wide range of aptitudes and interests demands a high school curriculum that addresses varying needs. In some Southern states, over three-fifths of the high school graduates pursue postsecondary education, so that a college preparatory curriculum is appropriate for them. But the curriculum for high school students who enter the job market directly upon graduation—or even before—ought to differ in emphasis. At the postsecondary level too, the curriculum offers diversity to meet the needs of students with different aptitudes and levels of preparation and at different kinds of institutions. The issue is whether it is possible to define a core of knowledge and skills at both levels that is to be expected of all students, regardless of diversity and occupational paths.

The heritage of the Sixties, when high schools reacted to the general demand for "relevance" by expanding the curriculum with electives, continues to characterize the current array of high school courses, from movie making to driver education.

The danger of minimums becoming norms

Partly in response to mandatory legislative initiatives, several Southern states are now focusing heavily on minimum competencies that each high school graduate must meet, as determined by testing. The emphasis on minimum competencies introduces the danger of minimums becoming norms. Concerted emphasis on minimums is necessary to address the failure of some high school students to achieve basic literacy and numerative skills, but the overall concern must be to challenge all students to attain higher levels of achievement.

An essential issue linking high schools and colleges is the necessity to redefine the content and raise the standards of the college preparatory curriculum. The continuing decline of SAT scores and recent National Science Foundation findings that only a small portion of high school students participate in rigorous sequences of mathematics and science courses underscore the urgency that secondary schools tighten their offerings for college-bound students.

The general preoccupation with minimums or floors of competency characterizes colleges as well as the high schools. Analysis of the current trend to reemphasize general education in the colleges, as compared to specialization and professional preparation, reveals that this general education is often no more

Dilution of the curriculum

than remedial instruction. The teaching in college of English grammar, composition, and remedial mathematics is not exactly what one would define as a liberal arts education that provides students with a common exposure to civilization and the world's scientific achievements.

Colleges have been buffeted by an additional pressure. Competition among institutions to enroll their share of the shrinking college-age population presents a threat to maintaining and improving the standards of the college curriculum. Slackened admission standards by colleges that no longer require a foreign language, a rigorous mathematics-science sequence, or any evidence of what the applicant's class standing is, send no signals to high school students that the academics are important.

Current college admission standards signal no demand for quality

In the general climate of competition for students, it will be difficult to gain adherence to higher standards by voluntary action of individual colleges. Recent action in Maryland to raise admission requirements at each public institution simultaneously is an example of needed coordination to prevent the sacrifice of standards.

In recent years, there has been increased criticism of the extensive amount of "remedial" education offered in colleges and universities. While higher education has always offered remedial education to some students, the advent of mass higher education in the Sixties and Seventies opened college doors to many students who in an earlier age would not have been considered "college material." Since that time, extensive remedial education programs have become part of the college curriculum.

The expansion of college "remedial" studies

Some colleges require "developmental" courses that do not count toward a college degree. Others do give credit for such work. Some state systems require successful completion of two-year college level work (with open admission) by students who did not adequately develop basic skills in high school. When these students must then be admitted by the four-year colleges, even if basic skills still may not have been met, the problem shifts to the upperclass years.

Remedial education, to be successful, typically entails a highly concentrated effort. Tutoring, laboratory experiences,

and just plain drill work require additional funds that may not be reflected in the usual "headcount" college financing.

Finding the most effective setting for remedial studies

Although a college setting may be more attractive to young adults than a return to adult classes in high schools, the college model may not be the most effective setting for concentrated remedial work. Indeed, the highly structured and disciplined procedures with which the Armed Services have corrected basic skills deficiencies bear little resemblance to the self-motivating, relaxed style of higher education.

In the long term, the need for remedial education at the collegiate level should be reduced substantially by measures at elementary and secondary levels to improve student performance. Most Southern states in recent years have strengthened their programs in kindergarten and the first three grades, realizing that the deficits created in those grades will probably plague pupils, and society, during entire lifespans. Remedial problems will endure in states that have not yet focused on improving early elementary education.

In the short term, greater emphasis on scholastic standards by colleges may create difficulties for marginal students, more of whom might then fall in the category of being required to take remedial work. Thus, a general affirmation to higher quality demands that correspondingly greater attention be given to effective means of providing remedial education.

To improve quality in the curriculum, the following recommendations are provided:

15 The state boards of education and higher education in each state should establish a joint committee to consider concerted action to establish and raise standards for the high school curriculum as well as for the general education component of higher education.

16 The state boards of education should examine the offerings of high schools for the purpose of strengthening the major field requirements, preventing the acceptance of peripheral courses to count for major subject requirements, and recommending repeal of legislatively mandated courses outside the major subjects.

17 The higher education board in each state should seek simultaneous action by the colleges and universities to raise admission standards. The private colleges should be invited and encouraged to participate in this general move.

18 The state boards of education and higher education in each state should appoint a joint committee to examine remedial education provided within their state, for the purpose of determining the most effective settings and models to serve the needs of insufficiently prepared high school graduates.

Preparing Youth for Work

Exposure to the "world of work" should be an integral aspect of growing up, and how the schools address this is a matter of the highest priority. In many localities two-thirds of the high schools' students enter the job market at graduation.

Fragmentation and duplication in vocational programs

Fragmentation characterizes occupational preparation in many states. Comprehensive high schools, area vocational-technical schools, postsecondary technical institutes and community colleges, senior colleges, proprietary schools, and manpower training programs under various federal auspices—all are in the business of offering occupational training. In many instances, there is duplication of programs which, to be effective, require up-to-date and costly equipment.

Ideally, the high school's role in preparing a young person for employment immediately upon graduation should include (a) literacy and quantitative skills on which the student can build to progress beyond entry jobs in a working career; (b) a

The high school's role in preparing youth for work

foundation of general knowledge with vocational application, which may or may not include specific job skills; and (c) introduction to the ground rules of the "world of work," including an understanding of the role of a job in the structure of the enterprise, the industry, and the economy.

The primary role of the schools is education, and this has a bearing on how schools address these elements. In general, the educational nature of each is evident; whether specific job skills should be included in the basic foundation is a subject of considerable disagreement. It has been noted that, for example, while a program that teaches a student the principles of hydraulics would be viewed as "educational," one that focuses narrowly on the job skill of repairing an automobile power steering mechanism may properly disregard the underlying relationships applicable to a wide assortment of technologies, occupations, and industries—it is a form of training, rather than education. Depending on the job skills involved, such preparation can widen the students' long-run opportunities or improve chances for immediate, but possibly dead-end, employment.

Comprehensive education or job skills training?

The emphasis of vocational education on a general technical background as against specific job skills training varies among states and local school districts. Some adhere to the philosophy that vocational education is exploratory and should provide an exposure to clusters of skills and trades, while industry is best suited to train workers in specific skills. Others stress job skills preparation, to give students immediate entry into a job. Yet this dilemma has not been addressed forthrightly by boards of education at state and local levels.

Generally, it is difficult for high school programs to give a firm grounding both in educational aspects and in the narrow training of tasks, especially since vocational courses often do not occur in a student's curriculum until the last two years of high school. In a time when states are exploring the possibilities for expanding high technology industry, it is essential that a work force be developed which is well-grounded, flexible, and adaptable to new industry needs, rather than trained for skills already on their way to obsolescence.

Successful examples of occupational preparation often include on-the-job components. Cooperative programs with

local employers, with students splitting their time between formal classroom instruction and actual worksites where specific skills are acquired, combine education and specific job skills training. An added advantage of these programs is that the skills training takes place where the newest and most relevant equipment is most likely to be available—on the job, rather than in the school building.

On-the-job cooperative skills training

A wider use of the cooperative approach depends on community support. If employers and unions do not open doors to accommodate students for internships, or even just for supervised observations of what goes on, the schools cannot expand cooperative programs.

Needs of local areas vary

High school vocational education is characterized by a tremendous diversity of programs and local conditions. Thus, one model is not suitable in all situations. For example, high school business education courses which include specific job skills training in typing and bookkeeping are well suited to the classroom and succeed in preparing high school graduates for immediate employment. And, high schools in isolated rural areas do not have access to actual employment settings to share the training of workers to meet the manpower needs of high technology industries, such as electronics, aviation, or communications. Because of these and other factors, the degree to which cooperative high school-industry occupational training is feasible will vary from one local area to another and among occupational programs.

The existing use of local advisory councils is a sensible approach toward adapting occupational programs to diverse local needs. Councils are most likely to recommend programs that meet actual manpower needs if they are truly representative of the industries and occupations of the area.

Eliminating duplication

There is a need to proceed with elimination of duplication among the occupational programs of various educational institutions and manpower training programs. The diversity of manpower needs of local areas indicates a need to decentralize the process of reform. Moves to effect improvements will entail adjustments by school districts and by the vocational-technical institutes and colleges, as well as by the proprietary schools and manpower programs in the local community. Outside assistance by ad hoc commissions may, however, be needed to effect change.

Transferability of competencies

Progress has been made through the Vocational-Technical Consortium of the States, sponsored by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, in defining levels of occupational competencies. This system certifies where students stand in performing an array of skill elements so they can progress from one program to another without wasteful repetition. Wider implementation of this system will reduce duplication of effort.

The following recommendations to improve vocational education are made:

19 The state board of education, in conjunction with local school boards, should review the nature of the vocational programs offered by the high schools in its state in order to establish the fundamental objectives for the programs. Priorities should be developed that balance needs for basic competency, exploratory educational exposure to job clusters, and specific skills training.

20 High schools, in addressing the job skill elements which are included in vocational programs, should shift their occupational training to as much cooperative involvement with employers and exposure to work settings as possible. An organized local community effort is needed to assist high schools in developing more cooperative programs. States should provide incentives to industries to participate in cooperative programs.

21 When state boards of education decide that the objective of vocational education in the high schools is direct job placement, programs unrelated to labor market needs should be discontinued.

22 The governor of each state should consider the appointment of a study commission to recommend consolidations and extensions among all the occupational training and manpower programs in the state, including programs in the apprenticeship trades. Such commissions should be assisted by local representatives with thorough knowledge of the variety of offerings and of problems in local areas.

Cooperation Required at State and Local Levels

Few, if any, of the preceding recommendations for improvement can occur without a coordinated effort by leaders of higher education and the schools. Specific emphasis has been given to needed coordination on such matters as (1) evaluation of certification requirements and teacher education programs; (2) the design of effective continuing education for teachers; (3) improved quality of the high school curriculum and of general education of freshmen and sophomores; and (4) the elimination of duplicate occupational programs.

Removing barriers between the schools and colleges

In most states, coordination of higher education and supervision of the public schools is divided between two boards. In several states, vocational-technical education is the responsibility of yet another board. Such separation at the top of the systems is reflected throughout the educational establishment. In the past, at state staff levels, there have been relatively few examples of common consideration of problems. Joint activities among individual school districts, and colleges and universities, are the exception rather than the rule. All too often the only time colleges display great interest in the schools is when recruiting high school seniors. Joint efforts by college and school teachers to deal with an issue that concerns them both are even less common. For example, with the current shortage of mathematics and science teachers for the schools, meetings have been all too rare between faculty and teachers at any level to consider together how the shortage might be addressed.

Signs of change

Fortunately, there are signs that these situations might be changing. In Maryland, for example, the boards of education and higher education sponsored a workshop for education leaders to consider problems that affect both the schools and colleges. The boards have begun a joint study of these matters. In North Carolina, the State Board of Education and the University Board of Governors have met and endorsed a specific agenda that deals largely with how to improve the selection and preparation of teachers. In Virginia, the Board of Education and Council for Higher Education recently met together and further joint meetings are planned. Other states are embarking on similar ventures.

A good example: coordinated action for gifted high school students

Much attention has been focused by the schools and colleges in recent years on minimum competencies. There is the need for comparable emphasis on challenging the full potential of gifted students. Joint efforts of the two sectors to challenge talented high school seniors are encouraging. In Georgia, for example, joint enrollments in a secondary school and in a public college are now possible for high school seniors. Credits earned may count for both sectors. At the institutional level, some colleges and schools have developed creative summer programs to serve high school students.

Much more can be done. How many colleges urge high school students to use their libraries? How often do high schools call on college faculty to lecture or give a laboratory demonstration? Where there are surplus faculty in a college with declining enrollment, what attempts have been made to use their talents in schools with teacher shortages?

Cooperative action is also needed in devising methods to deal with remedial curriculums for college students who have not mastered basic skills. The possibility of coordinating high school resources with costly developmental programs within the colleges has certainly not been adequately explored.

Outreach activity by college faculty to work directly with certain schools and school districts is particularly encouraging, but expanding such activity may depend partly on revisions in the current reward system for college faculty.

Mutual respect between schools and colleges

Coordination between secondary and postsecondary education must respect the potential for improvement in a true two-way relationship. College faculty will be exposed to the real life problems faced by teachers on the firing line, while the teachers will benefit from the stimulation of faculty counterparts in their own disciplines. An atmosphere based on mutual needs, rather than of one level condescending to the other, is essential.

In some states joint committees of education and higher education boards have existed over the years, but have produced few tangible results. Usually it has taken a crisis, such as financial constraints affecting both schools and colleges, to spur joint action. The threat of legislative action to tighten teacher selection has been another precipitating development that has helped to bring boards together. However, even where there is

no immediate problem demanding joint action, the education boards in a state will benefit from establishing systematic ongoing communications focused on real issues.

Accreditation under fire as quality control method

In the past, both the secondary and postsecondary sectors have relied on accreditation for quality control. This process has often depended on evaluations according to detailed criteria that may not represent the crux of what produces quality education. Many education and government leaders are wondering why the accreditation process could not have prevented some of the shortcomings in educational performance that are of major public concern. A reexamination of the accreditation process is something institutions cannot pursue individually: it is a priority issue for joint consideration.

To promote needed state and local cooperation, the following recommendations are made:

23 The governors should schedule joint meetings in any state where separate boards responsible for elementary-secondary, vocational-technical, and postsecondary education have not already begun meaningful joint activities. Joint meetings of state boards should center around specific issues. Initial attention should be given to review of teacher education programs, strengthening the continuing education programs of teachers, and a review of the accreditation system to which schools and colleges and their programs are subject.

24 States should review their present organization for the various educational sectors and strengthen coordination between separate governing authorities. Statutory or regulatory provisions that inhibit joint efforts by state boards of education and state boards of higher education or for community colleges should be reexamined and modified.

25 Lines of communication should be established at the local level between college and university presidents and superintendents of school systems, and between college trustees and school board members, to provide continuing leadership for joint consideration of mutual problems of the schools and higher education. An issue that demands their immediate attention is the joint development of creative programs to challenge the full potential of gifted high school students.

Financial Implications

The recommendations suggested here are a call for priorities as well as for more effective utilization of financial resources that support state educational systems. Initiatives for educational improvements made during a time of tight state and local govermental budgets, of course, must recognize the difficult financial constraints.

Offsetting additional funding through improved productivity

There is substantial potential for savings by improving the productivity of both sectors. The elimination of duplicative and ineffective programs and changes in bureaucratic practices that serve vested interests more than educational necessities will free funds that may be used to finance improvements.

Examples of savings

Several illustrations may be offered regarding the off-set of new investments by savings realized through improved productivity. The improvement of pre-service teacher education programs and stronger staff development for the existing teacher corps will undoubtedly call for new monies in many states. For example, it may be necessary to alter funding formulas for teacher education colleges to compensate for enrollment drops as standards are tightened. But these investments can be accompanied by measures to close out unproductive, low quality programs and to reduce graduate credit enrollments that are prompted by perfunctory recertification requirements. Similarly, the expense of more effective teacher selection and performance evaluation and strengthened programs at kindergarten and in the first three grades will generate savings by raising student achievement levels and by reducing the need for costly remedial education.

In vocational education, expanding cooperative programs with industry and possibly providing tax incentives to promote industry participation can be offset by reducing the number of high school locations requiring special, and costly, equipment.

The largest investment: higher teacher salaries

Regardless of potential savings, there will be a need for some additional funding to implement certain improvements for upgrading quality in the schools and higher education. The single most costly investment, of course, will be a general improvement of teacher salaries. In the final analysis, the public must face the issue of how to convince more of the talented college students that teaching is a desirable career alternative to positions in other professions and in business.

Appendix

A Minority Statement by William H. Drummond

The main thrust of the Task Force's report to the Board is that the quality of public education in the South can be improved by applying higher standards to teacher preparation programs and/or requiring higher qualifications for those entering teaching. Although I have no quarrel with this thrust, I do have concerns about how this thrust might be interpreted....

How does the call for tighter certification requirements fit with the appeal for less complex certification processes? How does the call for careful selection of candidates for teaching, academic scholarship as well as instructional effectiveness, fit with the suggestion that anyone with a degree from a college of arts and sciences should be able to enter secondary teaching? How does the call for higher academic standards and the need for greater social prestige for teaching fit with the statement that the lengthening of preparation "would be an extremely costly step"? Let me state my position on these issues:

1. Certification should be based on demonstrated performance. Although the Georgia approach is expensive to install (and can be criticized for its inadequate research base), its approach is excellent and should have long-term payoff. It trains people in every school district on how to observe and gather data about teaching performance. Without performance appraisal, focused on growth and improved effectiveness, there can be very little quality control or improvement behind the classroom doors.

"Paper certification"—that is, the accumulating of the necessary courses or degrees so that a certification clerk can check them off—is not nearly as important to quality improvement as on-site assessment by trained supervisors or peers.

There is no magic about learning to teach; it requires solid academic preparation, effective communication skills, and dedication (applied hard work) to student learning and achievement. In my opinion, good professional preparation helps candidates with all of these.

2. Institutional recommendation for teacher certification should be taken more seriously. Candidates should be recommended for teaching by the dean of arts and sciences attesting to the student's academic qualifications, and by the dean of the college of education attesting to the student's ability to perform as a teacher in varying classroom settings.

States should no longer certify candidates for teaching without institutional recommendation. Institutional accountability for quality can occur as "paper certification" is abolished.

3. Since about 1975, all of the professions and semi-professions have lengthened their preparation time period, except teaching. States in the South should consider 5- or 6-year programs for initial preparation. By so doing, all beginning teachers can be expected to be "liberally educated" as well as competent in teaching. Higher standards require longer preparation. Higher performance expectations justify higher salaries. Higher standards and higher salaries will make teaching a more attractive career choice.